

Obituary

Robert Forgan, 1891–1976

Dr. Robert Forgan, senior member of the Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases, died on January 8, 1976.

Robert Forgan was born on March 10, 1891, at Montrose in Scotland. He was educated at Aberdeen Grammar School and Aberdeen University, graduated M.A. in 1911 and M.B. B.Ch in 1915, and proceeded M.D. in 1924. He served in the R.A.M.C. from 1915 to 1920, latterly as a venereologist. He was awarded the Military Cross and mentioned in despatches.

After demobilization he took the D.P.H. and in 1921 he was appointed Venereal Diseases Officer to the Lanarkshire Joint Committee. He resigned in 1929 to become M.P. for West Renfrewshire and retired from politics in 1934. He then joined the medical staff of May and Baker Limited, where he continued to work part-time after retiring age.

Dr. Forgan was the last surviving founder member of the M.S.S.V.D. He was Secretary of the Working Party which took the first steps in forming the Society, and he drafted the first constitution. He was a member of Council from 1924 to 1929, and Vice-President from 1929 to 1930, and remained a keen supporter of the Society. He was a fluent speaker and entertained the Society with a lively account of its history at the Jubilee Meeting held in 1972 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. He also published a paper on the history of the treatment of trichomoniasis in the Jubilee Issue of this Journal in 1972 and he continued with medical editorial work until quite recently.

He had a warm personality and made many friends at home and abroad. He is survived by his wife, by the daughter of an earlier marriage, and by a son and two daughters.

Bruce P. Webster

Professor Bruce P. Webster, the well-known American physician and venereologist, died suddenly in his apartment in Manhattan on January 6, 1976. He was emeritus professor of clinical medicine at Cornell University Medical School and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses. He had recently presented a paper at the Anglo-American Conference on Sexually Transmitted Diseases organized by the Royal Society of Medicine in London in June, 1975.

Bruce Webster was born in Canada in Lansdowne, Ontario, and received his medical education at McGill University. After working as an intern at Montreal General Hospital, he became assistant resident in medicine and Jacques Loeb Fellow at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. It was here that he began his research into syphilis which was continued in the U.S.A. and Europe as a fellow in medicine of the National Research Council. In 1931 he was appointed assistant professor of medicine at Tulane University for one year and in 1932 he became

assistant professor at Cornell University Medical School. At this point he became a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Throughout the second world war Bruce Webster was a medical consultant to the War Department and held the rank of Colonel. During the early stages of the occupation of Japan he was the head of General Douglas MacArthur's medical staff. This was the start of his lifelong affection for Japan and he remained a trustee of St. Luke's International Medical Centre in Tokyo for the rest of his life.

In 1946 he became associate professor of clinical medicine at Cornell University Medical School, a post which he held for 20 years, until 1966, when he was made clinical professor of medicine. Shortly after the opening of the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center Bruce Webster received a grant from the Milbanke Foundation to establish a syphilis clinic to train undergraduate and postgraduate students. The clinic, which was a great success, was modelled on the famous Medicine I Clinic at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. He built up a large private practice at his office on the East Side of Manhattan to which patients of many nationalities and from all over the world came for his help and advice.

Bruce Webster took on many responsibilities in addition to his hospital work and private practice. He organized the medical department of Time Inc., the publishing firm, and was its medical director until his retirement in 1966. He served the American Social Health Association for many years as chairman

and vice-president, and was president from 1969 to 1972. He was also president of the American Venereal Disease Association and of the International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses. He was particularly active in this latter organization and travelled widely to attend its meetings in Europe and elsewhere.

In 1971 he was appointed chairman of the National Commission on Venereal Diseases of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He also helped to sponsor the International Travelling Seminar of the World Health Organization and the International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses and gave evidence to a committee of the United States Congress about venereal diseases in the U.S.A. He was, in addition, consultant to the World Health Organization. In 1975 he was awarded the William Freeman Snow Award of the American Social Health Association for distinguished service to humanity.

Bruce Webster had many friends throughout the world and particularly in the United Kingdom. He was a hard-working, clear-thinking physician, who made major contributions to the control of venereal diseases. He was a kind and generous host, particularly in his Japanese style house in East Hampton, Long Island, and in his apartment home in Manhattan. All those who knew him and were his friends on the international medical scene will remember him with gratitude and affection.

R. D. Catterall